



early
LEARNING
activity
GUIDE



BEST BEGINNINGS
Alaska's Early Childhood Investment

FIVE AREAS OF EARLY LEARNING

Experts have identified five areas of early learning that are essential to school readiness.



Physical Well-Being, Health
& Motor DEVELOPMENT



Social & Emotional
DEVELOPMENT



Approaches to LEARNING



Cognition & General
KNOWLEDGE



Communication, Language
& LITERACY

Your child's first five years are an extraordinary time, full of growth and development. During this time, your children look to their parents/caregivers as their first teachers.

To help you do your best, this booklet has information on child development and how to support your child's discovery of the world. This early education paves the way for future success in life.

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Sink or Float?

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your child at this AGE



Physical Health, Well-Being & Motor DEVELOPMENT

Hops and stands on one foot up to 2 seconds, catches a bounced ball most of the time



Social & Emotional DEVELOPMENT

Rather play with friends than alone, talks about interests



Approaches to LEARNING

Puts things in mouth, shows curiosity about things, and tries to reach for far objects



Cognition & General KNOWLEDGE

Watches things as they fall, puts things in mouth



Communication, Language & LITERACY

Uses finger to point, copies sounds, responds to own name



4-5 YEARS

In this activity, your child will get familiar with the alphabet and practice sorting skills.

- Choose two letters and write one on each bag.
- Show your child the bags and talk about the sound each letter makes.
- Ask your child to look around the house to find things that start with the two letters. Put them in the correct bag.
- Empty the bags. Pick up each item and name it. Ask your child to put everything back into the right bag.



4-5 YEARS

With this activity, your child will get to practice some hand-eye coordination.

- Roll up an old sock into a ball by alternately turning it inside out, then right side out.
- Do the same thing with the other sock.
- Wrap 2-3 rubber bands around the socks so they won't come unwound.
- Sew a piece of yarn or string in between the sock balls.

Hold the yarn off center from the middle, and twirl the balls around. Note: preschoolers may be too young to get the balls twirling the correct way, in opposite directions.



4-5 YEARS

Now is the time to teach your child responsibility. Let him help with simple tasks.

Choose some chores you and your child can do together. Talk, hum, or sing as you work.

- Clean up after play time.
- Throw away trash or sort recyclables.
- Make beds together.
- Feed pets.
- Clean the car, boat, or snow machine.
- Sort laundry.
- Help put clothes away.
- Set the table for meals.
- Help clear dishes after a meal.
- Get the mail.
- Pick berries.
- Help find things at the store.



4-5 YEARS

Yoga-like stretching and breathing help children relax and increase flexibility.

Turn on soothing music. Dim the lights, if desired.

Have your child lie on his back in an open space large enough for him to move freely.

Tell him to take five deep breaths, and count out loud as he breathes. Tell the child to close his eyes and make his body heavy and limp. Start with the toes and move up through the body.

Try various poses together:

- **Make the letter L:** sit up with legs in front. Point toes in and out slowly.
- **Shape tracing:** lie on back and draw circles and other shapes in the air with toes.
- **Butterflies:** Sit with bottoms of feet flat against each other and flap legs like wings.

End by lying down again and relaxing all body parts. Count five, slow breaths to end.



4-5 YEARS

This activity provides children with experience in discussing predictions and testing the results. It also gives them practice in categorizing objects based on size, shape, color, material, and weight.

Fill a container or bucket with water and cover the work area with butcher paper or a plastic tarp. This activity can also be done during bath time or in a kitchen sink.

Show the child the water container. Show each item to be dropped in the water.

Ask the child to predict which items will sink and which ones will float. Sort the objects into a float pile, and a sink pile.

Talk with the child about his predictions. Discuss size, shape, color, material, and weight of the objects.

Invite the child to add the items to the water. What sinks? What floats?

Add a prediction chart using paper or poster board. The child can draw a picture of each object and check off float or sink as they go.



Look for these fun early learning activities booklets for your child! Each issue is full of age-appropriate ideas of things you can do at home to support your child's early learning. Video instructions for many of the activities can be found on YouTube.

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